DIVISION OF PUBLIC HEALTH SCIENCES – COVID-19 RESPONSE
STANDARD OPERATING PROCEDURES
Version date: June 22, 2020

Changes made since prior version (6/12/2020) are marked in gray highlight.

Text in bold italics is extracted from the WFBH Institutional Guidance on Safe Re-Start of Research Activities (5/18/2020, 6/17/2020). All other text has been written by PHS leadership.

A. Preamble

This document describes our joint agreement to protect the health and safety of our PHS employees and community while continuing to be productive in a variety of work locations.

Beginning July 1, many PHS employees will have the choice of whether to conduct their job responsibilities remotely or from an on-site location. In consultation with their supervisor, employees will choose whether to work all or some days remotely or on-site. This flexibility comes with an added responsibility to complete all work tasks without compromising productivity or scientific integrity.

Another group of PHS employees will be required to be on-site (full-time or part-time) in order to fulfill their job responsibilities. These employees may include, but are not limited to: (1) staff who interact with research participants at the Public Health Research Clinic; (2) staff who have special equipment that can only be operated on-site; (3) staff providing computer/technical support; etc. These employees are required to be on-site to conduct that portion of their job responsibilities. Consult with your supervisor to determine whether you fall into this category.

Given the unique nature of this pandemic, the unknown course of the virus, and the time when a vaccine or herd immunity are available, we anticipate the need to make occasional changes to this document. We will communicate changes as they are made. The current version of this document will be housed on the PHS website (https://www.phs.wakehealth.edu/public/covid19.cfm).

B. Use of masks and social distancing

All research faculty and staff must adhere to the mask wearing standards set forth by the institution. With this, masks must be worn at all times while on campus with the exception of breaks that allow for social distancing or instances when an individual is working alone in an office. In any shared environment, masks must be worn at all times.

Specific to the 525@vine environment, masks must be worn when entering the building and in all areas except for your closed private office (e.g., conference rooms, hallways, breakrooms, file rooms, bathrooms, elevators, lobbies, and stairwells). Similar guidelines apply to Piedmont Plaza and any other spaces occupied by PHS employees.
Persons may only remove their mask when alone in their office with the door closed. If meeting with another person in a faculty or staff office, both must wear their masks.

Violations of these essential elements should be reported to the Department Chair and the Department Business Administrator and may be reflected in annual review documentation.

While mask use is important, social distancing will remain an important strategy to minimize the spread of COVID-19. Where possible, maintain 6 feet between you and others while on campus.

C. Hand hygiene

Hand washing is also an important preventive measure; therefore, wash your hands often. In clinical settings use of soap and water or hand sanitizer is expected before and after clinicians enter each patient room. In the context of PHS office environment, we strongly recommend using either soap/water or hand sanitizer upon arrival at your work location, before and after any meals consumed, after use of the restrooms, before and after use of breakroom amenities, and before entering any space (e.g., conference room, another office) that is not your personal office.

D. Disinfecting and cleaning spaces/surfaces

*Environmental Services and our contracted cleaning companies have initiated protocols to increase cleaning standards across all research buildings with a particular focus on increased cleaning frequency of high touch areas in common spaces. That said, teams must create and/or update Standard Operating Procedures, putting in extra measures to ensure a clean and appropriate environment for staff.*

Employees are required to clean breakroom appliances and conference room equipment before and after use. Disinfecting supplies and gloves will be provided. Each person is responsible for disinfecting their own workspaces. PHS supplies can be used for this purpose but are not to be permanently housed in an employee office.

Do not use disinfecting wipes or sprays on copy/printer machines as it can damage the equipment. Instead, wear gloves when using this equipment.

Disinfecting supplies and gloves are for the use of PHS faculty and staff who are working on-site. Anyone who is seen removing supplies from our location or who does not adhere to these guidelines regarding disinfecting/cleaning should be reported to the Department Chair and Department Business Administrator, and may be reflected in annual review documentation.

See document provided by Cushman & Wakefield on the PHS website for details of cleaning in 525@vine. ([https://www.phs.wakehealth.edu/public/covid19.cfm](https://www.phs.wakehealth.edu/public/covid19.cfm))

E. What to do if you are sick

*All research faculty and staff are required to stay home if they are sick with no exceptions.*
Symptoms of concern include but are not limited to: fever, cough, shortness of breath, vomiting, diarrhea, new loss of taste or smell, or fatigue. At this time, symptoms such as runny nose and headache are less specific for COVID-19. If persons have known chronic conditions such as allergies or migraines that typically cause such symptoms, they should consider if the pattern of symptoms is new or worse than usual, and if in doubt, consult with Employee Health (336-716-4801).

Follow all usual procedures when you are sick and unable to work: (1) contact your supervisor immediately to report your time away from work, and (2) record use of BTO.

F. **Self-administered screening**

**All faculty and staff self-administer the following screening questions daily:**

1. **Have you had a fever, cough, or shortness of breath in the last 7 days?**
2. **Have you had vomiting or diarrhea in the last 7 days?**
3. **Have you had contact with someone in the last 14 days who was diagnosed to have COVID-19?**
4. **Have you had contact with someone in the last 14 days who has the symptoms of COVID-19 (fever, cough, shortness of breath) but who has not been tested for COVID-19?**

Self-screening is required only on days the employee intends to come to the on-site location. Prior to entering any PHS space, each employee should ask themselves these four questions. If any response is positive, do not enter PHS space; instead, contact Employee Health for instructions (336-716-4801). Signage has been posted in PHS spaces to remind all employees of their responsibility of self-screening in order to reduce transmission of COVID-19.

G. **Contact Tracing**

*If a COVID-19 positive individual is known to have entered or worked in the office, notify Employee Health. The area may have to be temporarily closed for cleaning and disinfection.*

Employee Health and Infection Prevention work together to identify and document all employees who test positive for COVID-19. Once confirmed, they will work together to trace back all contacts within 48 hours who may be at risk of exposure (within 6 feet for greater than 15 minutes or unmasked). Notifications are sent out from Infection Prevention to those potentially exposed and/or leaders asking for specific information. This data is then sent to Employee Health for review and to provide further instructions for impacted staff.

PHS administrative staff will assist the contract tracing process by retrieving a list of all employees who may have come into contact with this individual. Security can provide a list of all badge swipes into the specific suite. (For this reason, we will not prop open the suite doors in 525@vine).

PHS leadership will alert all PHS employees of positive cases, as they become known, and as respect for confidentiality allows. In no case will we report the name of the employee who tested positive; we will leave this to the officials who provide contact tracing. PHS leadership will also alert building
management in 525@vine who will notify all tenants of the building; building management will clean common areas – the tenant is responsible for closing off and conducting deep cleaning/disinfection of affected spaces.

H. **Limitations on number of employees on-site**

*Limit the number of faculty and staff on-site to the absolute minimum possible, identifying strategies for how essential activities can be done with a smaller footprint at any one time.*

PHS administration/leadership will monitor the footprint to restrict capacity to 50% or less in each PHS suite (525@vine and the Piedmont Plaza suites) at any given time.

Based on the survey results, the smallest footprint in our spaces will likely occur on Sunday, Saturday, Friday, and Monday, in that order. If you are in a high risk group, you may consider working on-site on these days.

I. **Guidance for meetings**

*Identify activities that can be performed with reduced face-to-face interaction:*

- **Limit the number of in-person meetings and when possible, use remote collaboration tools (phone, video), even for those on site and in the same office/building.**
- **Encourage employees to use phones and email to ask each other routine questions or obtain service versus in-person discussions.**
- **If you must meet in person, limit attendance in conference rooms to a maximum of 50% occupancy.**
- **No in-person meeting should include more than 10 people.**

PHS will use remote collaboration tools/resources (WebEx, conference calls, Microsoft Teams, etc.) as the primary meeting option. In-person meetings should be exceedingly rare, well justified, and should be accompanied by a remote option. This will allow everyone to participate in a meeting regardless of whether they are working remotely or working on-site. People should not be admonished for not participating in person, nor pressured to attend in person.

Use of video-camera during video calls is strongly encouraged as this provides for a maximally productive meeting for everyone, as body language and eye contact are important forms of communication.

Maximum occupancy signage has been placed on all conference room doors to encourage proper adherence to guidance limiting conference rooms to a maximum of 50% occupancy. Seating in conference rooms (and/or attendees in a conference room) should be spaced to allow for 6 feet between attendees. See guidance in Section D regarding disinfecting and cleaning the conference room tables and computer/phone equipment before and after each use.
J. Breakrooms

Based on the PHS survey (June 2020), the following breakroom amenities were of limited interest to PHS employees and thus were taken out of service so as to limit the spread of COVID-19: coffeemakers, breakroom tables and chairs, and breakroom dishes.

All remaining break-room amenities (microwave, refrigerator, water dispenser, and hot water tap) continue to be available to PHS employees. Refer to details above (Disinfecting and cleaning spaces/surfaces) regarding your responsibilities as an employee to maintain a safe environment when using these amenities.

PHS employees are strongly encouraged to eat/drink (when masks are taken off) in their private office or if off-campus, where social distancing is possible, such as outdoors.

Maximum occupancy signage has been placed on all breakroom doors to encourage proper adherence to guidance limiting shared/enclosed spaces to a maximum of 50% occupancy.

No food should be provided at any meeting for attendees (e.g., lunches) nor left in the breakrooms for others to consume.

K. Children and volunteers

Do not permit children or volunteers to be on site at any time.

Volunteers are persons who do not receive pay for their work.

L. Communication

Excellent communication between team leaders and team members is essential to our continued success as a research community. Given this, supervisors must be aware of and approve of a work plan for all employees. The work plan should include the days and times that employees are working on-site vs working remotely and contact information for staff during all working hours.

Each Department will establish guidelines regarding how this is best accomplished. For example, is this a written or verbal agreement, how is it documented, how often is this updated, and who has access to these plans?

M. Visitors

Visitors include anyone who is not primary PHS faculty, PHS staff, or PHS students/post-docs/interns. Note that secondary PHS faculty and adjunct PHS faculty are considered visitors unless they have a permanent office in PHS space. Medical and physician assistant students are also considered visitors.

Visitors are discouraged from being present on-site at 525@vine. However, visitors are not prohibited. If visitors do come on-site, they are required to follow all institutional and PHS policies. That is, masks
are required, social distancing is required, disinfecting shared equipment and breakroom amenities is required, and screening before coming on-site is required.

Masks should be worn upon entry into the building. If the visitor arrives without a mask, it is the responsibility of the person for whom the visitor is meeting to provide a mask. Extra WFBH masks are available from the PHS Business Administrators until supplies are depleted.

Visitors must use WFBH badges to access PHS space. For visitors who do not have a badge and thus require escorting into the building, the Department Business Administrator must be notified so that they can record the date/time, name, affiliation and phone number. This is for the purpose of contact tracing if needed.

N. Requesting technical/computing support

Technical staff will be on-site on an alternating weekly schedule, limiting to one person at a time for most days. A weekly schedule will be available indicating which technician will be in the office on which days. For everyone’s safety, we will be trying to accomplish most work requests remotely, and only make in-person office visits when the issue mandates physical access to the system. Requests for support should be emailed to PHS_TECHHELP@wakehealth.edu. In-person requests are strongly discouraged and should be used only in emergencies. When in-person visits are necessary, we will schedule those with individuals following Institutional and Division guidelines with regards to use of proper protective equipment.

O. Requesting administrative support while on-site

A Business Administrator will be on-site each day of the week (9 AM to 4 PM) to respond to immediate administrative requests. Requests should be emailed to the following address PHS_Business_Administrators_DL@wakehealth.edu; please do not make requests in-person. The BA who is on-site that day will respond to your email. Issues to be addressed by the on-site BAs include the following, but are not limited to: office equipment issues (i.e. copiers/printers), facilities issues, cleaning/sanitizing supply replenishment, mask distribution for non-badged visitors, master key needs, supply closet access, emergent situations and visitor access. Every effort will be made to respond as quickly as possible based on the priority and number of requests.

P. Fire drills and emergency evacuation

Continue to follow all previous instructions provided by Cushman & Wakefield regarding fire drills and emergency evacuation. If there is an evacuation you may use any stair to exit. The signs on the stairwells that state up or down directions do not apply in emergencies.

*Document prepared by PHS Executive Committee (Wagenknecht, Ambrosius, Bertoni, Foley, Rhodes Vitolins), PHS Business Administrators (Buchheimer, Myers, Sizemore, Sprinkle, Troxler), and Rushing.*